



## **AFC HENLEY REPORT FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 6 APRIL 2017**

- *AFC Henley (formerly Henley Boys & Girls Football Club), is now in its 43<sup>rd</sup> year. Income is at a record £95,000.*
- *In the last 15 years AFC Henley has quadrupled in size, from 100 to 400 playing members aged from U4 to U18. Add to this our 60 volunteer team managers, coaches, cleaners and other helpers, and our total headcount approaches 500.*
- *While our large size and income means that we must apply all the disciplines required of a business, it is important to remember that we are a 'not-for-profit' grass-roots community club.*
- *Except for our groundsmen and a small number of paid external coaches, we are, from the chairman downwards, all unpaid volunteers, serving the community as best we can. Part of our community policy is to offer our facilities to charities and local schools.*

### **Teams**

We are currently fielding a record number of teams from U9 to U18 in the East Berks Football Alliance league. We have 22, potentially rising to 23 if the U9s add a fourth team. We are already one of the top dozen clubs in the league out of over 100 by number of teams registered. Next season we expect to register at least 24. To accommodate this number, we lease the five pitches at Jubilee Park and the full-sized pitch in Harpsden. We also use Henley YMCA and Henley Town FC as required. Mid-week training takes place on the astroturf at Jubilee Park and the artificial grass training area at Henley Rugby Club.

### **Official link with Reading Football Club**

For the first time in the club's recent history one of our young players, 8-year-old Luca Regueiro-Rial, has been offered a contract by Reading Football Academy, one of the top academies in the UK. He is the first AFC Henley Mini Soccer Centre member to have been honoured in this way, thanks to our close links with Reading Football Club, who are keener than ever to strengthen their brand locally. In that context we are extremely fortunate to have Shelley Strange, Reading Academy Recruitment Coordinator, and Keith Greene, of the Reading FC Community Trust, leading our Mini-Soccer Centre and mentoring our coaches. Shelley is a UEFA 'B' Licence coach, an FA Coach Mentor and a scout for the national women's team. She is also our official, direct line into the Academy.

### **Twinning links with Leichlingen continue**

We are pleased to report that our annual football exchange programme with SC Leichlingen is still active, having started back in the 1970s. An U13 squad from Leichlingen visits Henley every October and a return visit to Leichlingen takes place in the following spring, when we play in the annual Easter Tournament.

### **Planned new facilities**

We are looking forward to a new clubhouse. Developer T. A. Fisher will be purchasing and demolishing the Council's site adjacent to Tesco, including the two Henley Hockey and AFC Henley clubhouses, and will build around 35 residential units. Plans are progressing well for the relocation of



the clubhouses to Jubilee Park, financed by Henley Town Council from the proceeds of the sale of the site.

### **Child safeguarding**

We take safeguarding extremely seriously, especially in light of the current focus on football. All our managers, coaches and coaching assistants have in-date CRCs, as required by the Football Association, and our supervision policy is to always have two adults at all coaching sessions and matches. We have strengthened our welfare team by appointing James deJode as our Club Welfare Officer. To see our safeguarding policies, please go to [www.afchenley.com](http://www.afchenley.com).

### **Coaching**

Our Saturday Mini-Soccer Centre continues to provide skills training to over 60 boys and girls from age 4 - 8 and we offer Midweek Mini Soccer on Mondays from 5- 6pm on the astroturf. Also on weekday evenings we run several invitation-only Player Development Centres (PDC), including one for goalkeepers, plus five after-school clubs in state and private schools. We provide holiday camps and football parties too.

### **Henley Football Partnership (HFP)**

The HFP brings ourselves, Henley Town Football Club and Henley YMCA under one umbrella as a virtual club, designated by the FA as a Charter Standard Community Club, the highest level available. This enables us to offer football for all ages and abilities, from pre-school to adults, including those with learning difficulties. The HFP has twice been voted Oxfordshire FA Community Club of the Year. We have recently linked up with Henley College, offering work experience and refereeing to their sports students, and we are starting to work closely with Henley Leisure Centre. Meanwhile, the HFP is currently preparing a business plan for a full-sized 3G artificial pitch at the Triangle Ground in Mill lane.

### **Financial Support**

Our long-term shirt sponsor, Fix Auto, has had to withdraw and we are extremely grateful for the company's support over the last few years. There is now an opportunity for a new sponsor to come in. We are also indebted to Invesco Perpetual and Stuart Turner for their generous annual donations.

**Trevor Howell**

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